



April 13, 2021

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chairman  
Committee on House Finance

Dear Chairman Abney and Committee Members:

On behalf of the more than 6,000 members of the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® (RIAR), thank you for accepting testimony and affording our organization with the opportunity to express our support for H 5951 and the creation of a deputy secretary of commerce and housing.

REALTORS® across Rhode Island appreciate the House's commitment to improving housing access for residents. Housing contributes approximately 18 percent of Rhode Island's gross state product or one-fifth of our state's economy.<sup>1</sup> We know that housing creates jobs, supports infrastructure and schools, and fosters community development that improves healthy living, education outcomes, and sustainability. However, we remain concerned that many Rhode Islanders do not have access to homeownership opportunities and safe and sustainable housing.

Rhode Island needs a leading voice to articulate the policies that will improve access to housing on all levels. That is why RIAR strongly supports the creation of a deputy secretary of commerce and housing. Without a point person who is empowered with coordinating and executing a critical facet of our economy, Rhode Islanders will continue their struggles to access housing opportunities, whether owned or rented.

The Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® respectfully urges this committee and the House of Representatives to support H 5951.

Sincerely,

David A. Salvatore  
Government Affairs Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/documents/2019-state-economic-impact-of-real-estate-activity-ri-04-14-2020.pdf>